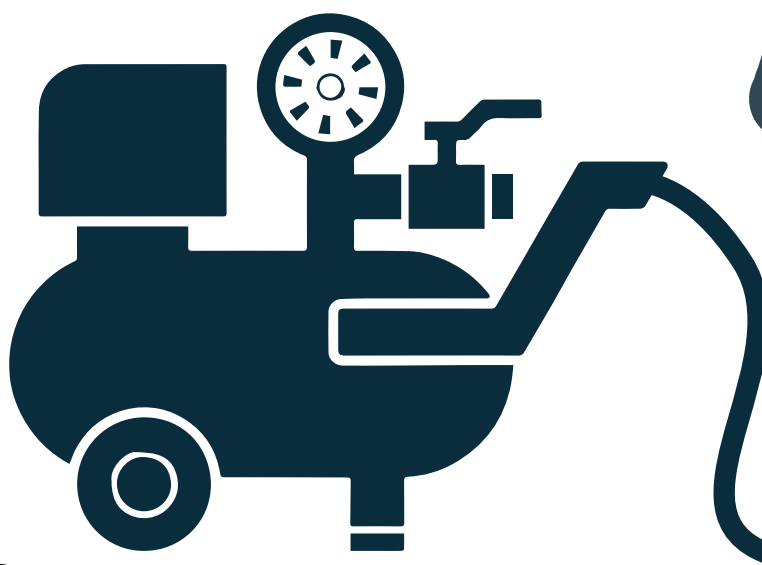


# COMPRESSED AIR SAFETY

**COMPRESSED AIR IS OFTEN MISJUDGED AND NOT RECOGNIZED AS A HAZARD BECAUSE PEOPLE OFTEN CONSIDER AIR AS HARMLESS.**

- **WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS OF USING COMPRESSED AIR?**
- **COMPRESSED AIR SAFETY TIPS**
- **SHOULD I USE COMPRESSED AIR TO CLEAN MYSELF?**



**BC Forest Safety**

Safety is **good** business



# COMPRESSED AIR SAFETY



## WHAT ARE THE HAZARDS OF USING COMPRESSED AIR?

Compressed air is extremely forceful. Depending on its pressure, compressed air can dislodge particles or enter your bloodstream or damage your eyes. There have also been reports of hearing damage caused by the pressure of compressed air and by its sound.

On some occasions, compressed air can enter the blood stream through a break in the skin or a body opening. An air bubble in the blood stream is known medically as an embolism, a dangerous medical condition in which a blood vessel is blocked, in this case, by an air bubble. An embolism of an artery can cause coma, paralysis or death depending upon its size, duration and location.

Using air to clean forces the dirt and dust particles into the air, making these contaminants airborne and creating a respiratory hazard.

## COMPRESSED AIR SAFETY TIPS

- 1) Never apply compressed air to the skin or direct it at a person. Even air at a pressure of 15 psi can cause serious injury.
- 2) Never use a compressed air hose to clean dirt or dust from your clothing or body.
- 3) Do not use compressed air for cleaning purposes if possible. Consider using a broom, water if plausible or other methods. If compressed air is required for cleaning, ensure that you use the lowest possible PSI and follow company safe work procedures.
- 4) Always wear required PPE such as goggles or a face shield over approved safety glasses. Wear ear protection to protect from exposure to excessive noise.
- 5) Never crimp, couple, or uncouple pressurized hose. Shut off valves and bleed down pressure before making any hose connections. Use only the correct type and size of hose end fittings and connectors.
- 6) Never use frayed, damaged, or deteriorated hoses. Always store hoses properly and away from heat sources or direct sunlight. A hose failure can cause serious injury. Hose reels can decrease your chances of injury, as well as help hoses last longer.
- 7) When blowing compressed air through a hose or air line, ensure that the open end is held securely. A free end can whip around and can cause injury.

## SHOULD I USE COMPRESSED AIR TO CLEAN MYSELF?

Under no circumstances should anyone use compressed air to clean off clothing or any part of the body. Although many people know using compressed air to clean debris or clothes can be hazardous, it is still used because of old habits and the easy availability of compressed air in many workplaces. Even air at a pressure of 15 psi can cause serious injury.



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